Hesper 1st mo. 17th 1862

My dear Cousin,

When thy last arrived, I felt so greatful for thy speedy reply to mine, that I resolved that three days, should not elapse, before I answered it, but three weeks, or more have passed, and I have taken the pen for the first time this evening to fulfil the pleasing duty, — for two weeks I have been too unwell to attempt writing when my domestic cares would admit of it, at other times company prevented,

I do as far as capable, sympathize with thee in thy late trial, in giving up thy dear son, to join the army, but think I should feel comparatively easy about him, while acting as nurse, ~~though not~~ though I should, if in the battle field, ~~or abroad~~, where he would be liable to take life, as well as loose his,

~~There is~~ The same watchful Eye, over us in all places, and situations, and the same Power to preserve, in one as the other, yet I would much prefer the chances in the Hospital, hope he will continue to be able to administer to the relief of suffering humanity, — James has often said he should enlist, if it seemed necessary, (it would be exceedingly trying to me,) there have more offered in this country, than were accepted, — I can easily understand why thou thinks more of William, than all the rest, the peculiarity of his position seems to demand it,

I was surprised to hear that the fare at Union Springs was poor; in this age, and that rich country it seems allmost inexcusable, — ~~There was some complaint~~ ~~me~~ while at Adrian School, ~~that~~ there was a good deal of complaint, and not without cause, but the fault rested with the superintendants, it was soon looked into, and remedied as far as could be before a change took place in that department, most of the time the provisions were ample, both in quantity, and quality, perhaps too much so for the prosperity of the institution, but it is coming up again I believe, hope it will yet do much good, I have been too closely connected with it not to feel a ~~concern~~ interest in its success, — Daniel Satterthwaite is still there, a very efficient teacher, Mary C. Harkness, (Richard's daughter,) is assistant.)

I believe no one ever heard me complain much of the fare at Providence, tho' it was with an effort sometimes that I got down enough to satisfy hunger the butter I recollect was at times very bad, and I could not eat the beef, so rare, as we had it there, but just heat through, — it was years before I could eat roast beef, with a relish, — Thou speaks of going through the Institution", ~~pray show~~ with thy minds eye, every room seems as familiar to me as if I had been there but last week, I see it as it was years ago, it is doubtless much changed since I was there, ~~it~~ It was Abby Collins that was at school there when we were, Mary W. was a elder sister, she and I were very intimate for many years, but I had lost all traces of her for a very long time I have not seen an account of her death — I think I have never met with any other name so frequently as "Mary Collins", unless it is "Robert Knowles", — Abel's wife wrote her name, Mary A. — Gifford Collins' daughter, Mary B. — Rowland's wife, Mary C. — Peter's Collins daughter, Mary D. — Wm Collins' daughter Mary E. — Isaac's wife Mary F. — Sheffields daughter Mary K. — Abel's daughter Mary W. — I have been acquainted with some half dozen others who I do not recollect to have any middle letter.

I regreted that I did not know Jesse Dean was an acquaintance of thine when I saw him, and Wife at meeting, I should certainly have introduced myself, — ~~his wife~~ she was very busy with the Vermont friends when I came out and passed him on the porch, quite alone, I stoped and shook hands with him; — James saw them at Dr. Battey's the day previous, — — Ruth Battey's health is not good, but she gets out to meeting most of the time, twice a week they live three miles and half, from K. Tabor's, where their meeting is held, they have a monthly meeting, and Salem Quarterly meeting is held there once a year, they are within the limits of Indianna Yearly Meeting, but do not acknowlege subordination to it, they are at present unsettled in that respect, whether they will some day have a Y. M. in Iowa, time only can decide; thou dost ~~think~~ I conclude that my husband attends there altogether, I have ~~been~~ been there to meeting a few time and some of my warmest friends, are amongst their number,

I have written on this evening almost to the notice wingeed of Murray or Webster but knowing that at a previous meeting in the Hall Mary it would be a little to make it my meaning and express the feeling of

Yet I have never felt that it would be best for me to request to have my right of membership transfered there, but do not think that myself, and husband, live unhappily on the account, it is far otherwise, — I have not been there more than once in more than a year. — Thou art aware I conclude that there are very many changes in these days, both in discipline and usage in our society, that to an old fashioned Friend must seem entirely inconsistent; and we cannot conclude that going back into what our forefathers were brought out of can advance the cause of truth, or sustain Quakerism on its Ancient foundation, — but I am willing to hope the changes are not as great in all places as they are here.

I conclude Joshua Dean was correct in his estimate of the experience of the inhabitants of this country, nearly every one I think would acknowledge, it had been abundant in privations, and inconveniences; many were just getting comfortably situated, as this terrible War, with all its desolating effects came upon us, it

all kinds of produce are very low, now at the season for taking off their Pork, for which farmers had expected a good price, they cannot get more than $2,50. per hundred, it has been as low as $2,00, — I am not quite sure it is now, we have not killed ours. money very scarce, and those in debt, are doubtless straitened to meet their obligations, I heard my husband tell, someone the other day who was complaining of debts, that he "believed he did not owe any one a cent," — the credit of saying, "blessed be nothing" is awarded, I believe to an old woman, but however small our possessions, we are not deprived of any the necessaries of life and that we should esteem a favour at all times, Oliver Wendell Holmes, gives it as his opinion, that we can "live in these days on, bread, & the newspapers," my husband would like Coffee, and crackers, added, to his bill of fare, —

Thou need borrow no trouble as to doubts whether thou had written to me before since I wrote, if thou hast been guilty of such a thing, I've had no evidence of

it.

my old age, I should like to attend one of those meetings, not likely we be.

Dost thou know any thing of Abby Pierce, I once met with her in N. Y. since which I have heard nothing from her — Marion H. Knowles, health is very poor, she has been at "Our Home," a water cure, somewhere in western N. Y. her disease is a softening of the brain, something I have never been acquainted with,

In much love to thee and thine, in which my husband joins

I remain as ever thy friend

Sarah M. Donald

We are having warm weather just now 34, above zero to-day, last week it was nearly as much below, it is very much so with life, generally, in these parts.

W. 1-17-1862 (7)

21st.

Third day evening, as this sheet is still on hand I will just say, thy acquaintances in these parts, almost invariably enquire after thee when I meet with them, and desire to be remembered to thee, when I write they manifest much interest in thy well fare —

Russel & Lydia Tabor, visited here a few weeks ago, Dr. Battey & Wife last first day evening, they had been to his fathers, Zeno, moved in there again, to spend the winter, his wife has been very sick with typhoid fever, for several weeks, she sat up nearly an hour that day, but is very feeble.

Her brother Albert Pike was buried on Christmas-day, five weeks from the day of his marriage, with Malvina Wilson, she is in her 18th year, a young widow. — it is thought Clara's exposure there occasioned her sickness. — James Hervey, lives in the family with his father and mother I think he was married to Lydia Maria Haines, last winter, — Joshua Hove, & Candace Worth, were married on New Years day perhaps thou knew them, on the 5th of the mo. Benj. Tabor to Charlotte Rowe, all of Hopper. — Thy friends about here are in usual health as far as I have heard. —

Ruth Chase has entirely recovered, I believe, and James about the same.

Benjamin Allen was sick in the fall but he has nearly or quite recovered from it, Caroline's hands I think are quite ~~double~~ sore, Mary, and Lydia Battey, are boarding there this winter, and attending school in Hope — I hope Thomas' eyes are better I have suffered so much with mine, that it troubles me very much to see any one afflicted in that way, I have had very little inflamation in ~~them~~ for two years, but nothing less than a kerosene lamp, will enable me to read, or write, in the evening; — Neither have I heard any thing from South Kingston for a long time, even the Hanley girls neglect to write, I have written several times to cousin H. Hazard, since receiving a line from her, I cannot reckon, one correspondent there now, — well that dont prevent my thinking of the dear old place and the many happy days, and some painful ones, I have passed there.

Is it not wonderful how memory will wander back, to scenes of former days and bring them as vividly to mind as if they had just occurred, and that through all the changes there should be so little change in ourselves,

Or that we should take so much interest in things that interested us when young, — but perhaps I am an exception, I sometimes think I am, and that no other woman ~~who~~ has lived for more than 62, years and ~~but has~~ not acquired more dignity, and maturity of mind, — I can scarcely realize that I have lived thus long and not a grey hair to make me look venerable, (but N. has enough for both,) — Wisdom is said to be "grey hairs to a man, and an unspotted life old age," and here I find myself sadly deficient again, as I have nothing but weakness and frailty to boast of, and cannot recollect one good deed I have ever done, but a bundance of misdeeds, ~~but~~ If I could see thee I would try to convince thee I did not mean to be the thoughtless thing this sheet might denote, but that I have a warm heart away down below much rubbish. —

I have seen one of those pamphlets those mentioned found it very interesting, Geo. N. Holway received it from some of his friends east, thinking I would like ~~to see~~ to see it he brought it over. even in

Dear sister Rachel
not withstanding I have
addressed the most of my letter
to sis P, thou art not forgotten
nor thy dear children for
whose wellfare I feel a deep
interest, Has Timothy gone
home & not called here, or
has he been forced into the
army; we have not herd from
him I think since the first
of 9th mo, how is Marys
helth O do write and tell me
how you all are, & what about
me thinks I can see you all
moving round in regular order
thy selfe presiding over them as
when I was their, James & Charles
I think likley have altered in
their size & looks some; Frank
fancy Jr, is teaching this winter
or perhaps at Morristown attending
school

(5) 1-17-62

what price did you get
for your Butter & cheese this
year Butter here has varied from
8 to 15 cts we have sold ours from 16
to 18 Cheese has sold from 4 cts
to 8 & a half we made 40, would probably
average 35 when cured; we have sold
nearly half of them for 0, the rest
are yet on hand we sell them one
at a time as individuals want them
ours are too small for the Boston
market; How is it with you,
do you keep up your little meeting
yet; I often think of you when convened
here with a little handfull

Love to all in which my family
all join me, I am ashamed to
think I have not written to
thy sister Mary who I am so much
indebted; thy sister M S H,